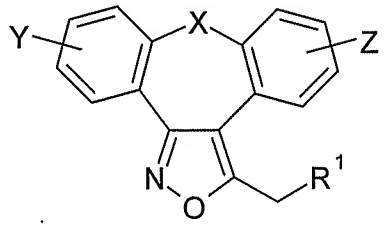
**Claims:**

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) A compound of formula **I:**




I

wherein

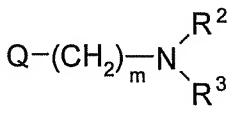
X is selected from the group consisting of $CH_2$,O, S, S(=O), $S(=O)_2$ and $NR^a$, wherein $R^a$ is selected from the group consisting of hydrogen, $C_1$-$C_3$-alkyl, $C_1$-$C_3$-alkanoyl, $C_1$-$C_7$-alkoxycarbonyl, $C_7$-$C_{10}$-arylmethoxycarbonyl, $C_7$-$C_{10}$-aroyl, $C_7$-$C_{10}$-arylalkyl, $C_3$-$C_7$-alkylsilyl and $C_5$-$C_{10}$-alkylsilylalkoxyalkyl;

Y and Z are each independently selected from the group consisting of hydrogen, halogen, $C_1$-$C_4$-alkyl, $C_2$-$C_4$-alkenyl, $C_2$-$C_4$-alkynyl, halo-$C_1$-$C_4$-alkyl, hydroxy, $C_1$-$C_4$-alkoxy, trifluoromethoxy, $C_1$-$C_4$-alkanoyl, amino, amino-$C_1$-$C_4$-alkyl, $C_1$-$C_4$-alkylamino, *N*-($C_1$-$C_4$-alkyl)amino, *N,N*-di($C_1$-$C_4$-alkyl)amino, thiol, $C_1$-$C_4$-alkylthio, sulfonyl, $C_1$-$C_4$-alkylsulfonyl, sulfinyl, $C_1$-$C_4$-alkylsulfinyl, carboxy, $C_1$-$C_4$-alkoxycarbonyl, cyano and nitro;

$R^1$ is selected from the group consisting of hydrogen, halogen, $C_1$-$C_7$-alkyl optionally substituted with one or more substituents selected from the group consisting of halogen, hydroxy, $C_1$-$C_4$ alkoxy, thiol, $C_1$-$C_4$ alkylthio, amino, N-($C_1$-$C_4$) alkylamino, N,N-di($C_1$-$C_4$-alkyl)-amino, sulfonyl, $C_1$-$C_4$ alkylsulfonyl, sulfinyl and $C_1$-$C_4$ alkylsulfinyl; $C_2$-$C_7$-alkenyl optionally substituted with one or more halogen atoms; $C_2$-$C_7$-alkynyl; hydroxy; hydroxy-$C_2$-$C_7$-alkenyl; hydroxy-$C_2$-$C_7$-alkynyl; $C_1$-$C_7$-alkoxy; thiol; thio-$C_2$-$C_7$-alkenyl; thio-$C_2$-$C_7$-alkynyl; $C_1$-$C_7$-alkylthio; amino; *N*-($C_1$-$C_7$-alkyl)amino; *N,N*-di($C_1$-$C_7$-alkyl)amino; $C_1$-$C_7$-alkylamino; amino-$C_2$-$C_7$-alkenyl; amino-$C_2$-$C_7$-alkynyl;

amino-$C_1$-$C_7$-alkoxy; $C_1$-$C_7$-alkanoyl; $C_7$-$C_{10}$-aroyl; oxo-$C_1$-$C_7$-alkyl; $C_1$-$C_7$-alkanoyloxy; carboxy; ~~an optionally substituted~~ $C_1$-$C_7$-alkyloxycarbonyl optionally substituted with one or more substituents selected from the group consisting of halogen, hydroxy, $C_1$-$C_4$ alkoxy, thiol, $C_1$-$C_4$ alkylthio, amino, N-($C_1$-$C_4$) alkylamino, N,N-di($C_1$-$C_4$-alkyl)-amino, sulfonyl, $C_1$-$C_4$ alkylsulfonyl, sulfinyl and $C_1$-$C_4$ alkylsulfinyl; ~~an optionally substituted~~ $C_7$-$C_{10}$-aryloxycarbonyl optionally substituted with one or two substituents selected from the group consisting of fluoro, chloro, $C_1$-$C_4$ alkyl, cyano, nitro, hydroxy, $C_1$-$C_4$ alkoxy, thiol, $C_1$-$C_4$ alkylthio, amino, N-($C_1$-$C_4$) alkylamino, N,N-di($C_1$-$C_4$-alkyl)-amino, sulfonyl, $C_1$-$C_4$ alkylsulfonyl, sulfinyl and $C_1$-$C_4$ alkylsulfinyl; carbamoyl; *N*-($C_1$-$C_7$-alkyl)carbamoyl; *N,N*-di($C_1$-$C_7$-alkyl)carbamoyl; cyano; cyano-$C_1$-$C_7$-alkyl; sulfonyl; $C_1$-$C_7$-alkylsulfonyl; sulfinyl; $C_1$-$C_7$-alkylsulfinyl; nitro;

a substituent of the formula **II**:



**II**

wherein

$R^2$ and $R^3$ are each independently hydrogen, $C_1$-$C_4$-alkyl or aryl [[as]] as defined above or,

$R^2$ and $R^3$ taken together with the nitrogen atom to which they are attached form an ~~optionally substituted~~ five or six member heterocycle containing at least one heteroatom selected from the group consisting of O,S, and N ~~or heteroaryl~~ which can be optionally substituted with one or two substituents selected from halogen, $C_1$-$C_4$ alkyl, cyano, nitro, hydroxy, $C_1$-$C_4$ alkoxy, thiol, $C_1$-$C_4$ alkylthio, amino, *N*-($C_1$-$C_4$) alkylamino, *N,N*-di($C_1$-$C_4$-alkyl)-amino, sulfonyl, $C_1$-$C_4$ alkylsulfonyl, sulfinyl, and $C_1$-$C_4$ alkylsulfinyl; or

a monocyclic or bicyclic aryl group; a monocyclic or bicyclic heteroaryl group; and a heterocycle, wherein the monocyclic or

bicyclic aryl group, the monocyclic or bicyclic heteroaryl group and the heterocycle are linked to the thiophene ring via a direct bond or a C1-C4 alkylene group , and are each optionally substituted with one or more substituents selected from the group consisting of fluoro, chloro, C1-C4 alkyl, cyano, nitro, hydroxy, C1-C4 alkoxy, thiol, C1-C4 alkylthio, amino, N-(C 1-C4) alkylamino, N,N-di(C1-C4-alkyl)-amino, sulfonyl, C1-C4 alkylsulfonyl, sulfinyl and C1-C4 alkylsulfinyl;

m is an integer from 1 to 3;

Q is oxygen, sulfur or nitrogen;

and pharmaceutically acceptable salts ~~and solvates~~ thereof.

2. (Previously Presented) A compound according to claim 1 wherein X is O or S.

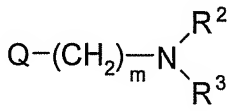
3. (Previously Presented) A compound according to claim 1 wherein Y and Z are each independently selected from the group consisting of hydrogen, fluorine, chlorine, bromine, $C_1$-$C_4$-alkyl, halo-$C_1$-$C_4$-alkyl, hydroxy, $C_1$-$C_4$-alkoxy, trifluoromethoxy, $C_1$-$C_4$-alkanoyl, amino, amino-$C_1$-$C_4$-alkyl, *N*-($C_1$-$C_4$-alkyl)amino, *N,N*-di($C_1$-$C_4$-alkyl)amino, thiol, $C_1$-$C_4$-alkylthio, cyano and nitro.

4. (Currently Amended) A compound according to claim 1 wherein:

$R^1$ hydrogen, halogen, $C_1$-$C_7$-alkyl optionally substituted with one or more substituents selected from the group consisting of halogen atom, hydroxy, $C_1$-$C_4$ alkoxy, thiol, $C_1$-$C_4$ alkylthio, amino, *N*-($C_1$-$C_4$) alkylamino and *N,N*-di($C_1$-$C_4$-alkyl)-amino; hydroxy; $C_1$-$C_7$-alkoxy; thiol; $C_1$-$C_7$-alkylthio; amino; *N*-($C_1$-$C_7$-alkyl)amino; *N,N*-di($C_1$-$C_7$-alkyl)amino; amino-$C_1$-$C_7$-alkoxy; $C_1$-$C_7$-alkanoyl; $C_7$-$C_{10}$-aroyl; $C_1$-$C_7$-alkanoyloxy; ~~an optionally substituted~~ $C_1$-$C_7$-alkyloxycarbonyl optionally substituted with one or more substituents selected from the group consisting of halogen, hydroxy, $C_1$-$C_4$ alkoxy, thiol, $C_1$-$C_4$ alkylthio, amino, N-($C_1$-$C_4$) alkylamino, N,N-di($C_1$-$C_4$-alkyl)-amino, sulfonyl, $C_1$-$C_4$ alkylsulfonyl, sulfinyl and $C_1$-$C_4$ alkylsulfinyl; ~~an optionally~~

~~substituted~~ $C_7$-$C_{10}$-aryloxycarbonyl optionally substituted with one or two substituents selected from the group consisting of fluoro, chloro, $C_1$-$C_4$ alkyl, cyano, nitro, hydroxy, $C_1$-$C_4$ alkoxy, thiol, $C_1$-$C_4$ alkylthio, amino, N-($C_1$-$C_4$) alkylamino, N,N-di($C_1$-$C_4$-alkyl)-amino, sulfonyl, $C_1$-$C_4$ alkylsulfonyl, sulfinyl and $C_1$-$C_4$ alkylsulfinyl; carbamoyl; *N*-($C_1$-$C_7$-alkyl)carbamoyl; *N,N*-di($C_1$-$C_7$-alkyl)carbamoyl; cyano; cyano-$C_1$-$C_7$-alkyl; nitro;

a substituent of the formula **II**:



**II**

wherein

$R^2$ and $R^3$ are each independently hydrogen, $C_1$-$C_4$-alkyl, aryl as described above; or

$R^2$ and $R^3$ taken together with the nitrogen atom to which they are attached form a heterocycle or heteroaryl selected from the group consisting of morpholine-4-yl, piperidine-1-yl, pyrrolidine-1-yl, imidazole-1-yl and piperazine-1-yl; or

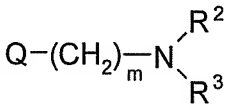
monocyclic or bicyclic aryl group; monocyclic or bicyclic heteroaryl group; and a heterocycle, wherein the monocyclic or bicyclic aryl group, the monocyclic or bicyclic heteroaryl group and the heterocycle are linked to the thiophene ring via a direct bond or a C1-C4 alkylene group , and are each optionally substituted with one or more substituents selected from the group consisting of fluoro, chloro, C1-C4 alkyl, cyano, nitro, hydroxy, C1-C4 alkoxy, thiol, C1-C4 alkylthio, amino, N-(C 1-C4) alkylamino, and N,N-di(C1-C4-alkyl)-amino; and

m has the meaning of an integer from 1 to 3;

Q is oxygen.

5. (Previously Presented) A compound according to claim 1 wherein Y is hydrogen or chlorine and Z represents hydrogen.

6. (Currently Amended) A compound according to claim 1 wherein $R^1$ is $CH_3$, $CH_2Br$, $CH_2OH$ or a substituent of formula **II**:



**II**

wherein ~~$R^2$, $R^3$, Q and m have the above defined meaning~~

$R^2$ and $R^3$ are each independently hydrogen, $C_1$-$C_4$-alkyl or aryl as defined above or,

$R^2$ and $R^3$ taken together with the nitrogen atom to which they are attached form an five or six member heterocycle containing at least one heteroatom selected from the group consisting of O,S, and N which can be optionally substituted with one or two substituents selected from halogen, $C_1$-$C_4$ alkyl, cyano, nitro, hydroxy, $C_1$-$C_4$ alkoxy, thiol, $C_1$-$C_4$ alkylthio, amino, *N*-($C_1$-$C_4$) alkylamino, *N,N*-di($C_1$-$C_4$-alkyl)-amino, sulfonyl, $C_1$-$C_4$ alkylsulfonyl, sulfinyl, and $C_1$-$C_4$ alkylsulfinyl; or

a monocyclic or bicyclic aryl group; a monocyclic or bicyclic heteroaryl group; and a heterocycle, wherein the monocyclic or bicyclic aryl group, the monocyclic or bicyclic heteroaryl group and the heterocycle are linked to the thiophene ring via a direct bond or a C1-C4 alkylene group , and are each optionally substituted with one or more substituents selected from the group consisting of fluoro, chloro, C1-C4 alkyl, cyano, nitro, hydroxy, C1-C4 alkoxy, thiol, C1-C4 alkylthio, amino, N-(C 1-C4) alkylamino, N,N-di(C1-C4-alkyl)-amino, sulfonyl, C1-C4 alkylsulfonyl, sulfinyl and C1-C4 alkylsulfinyl;

m is an integer from 1 to 3;

Q is oxygen, sulfur or nitrogen.

7. (Previously Presented) A compound according to claim 6 wherein m is 2 or 3.

8. (Currently Amended) A compound according to claim 1 selected from the group consisting of:

3-methyl-2-oxa-8-thia-1-aza-dibenzo[*e,h*]azulene;

11-chloro-3-methyl-2-oxa-8-thia-1-aza-dibenzo[*e,h*]azulene;

3-methyl-2,8-dioxa-1-aza-dibenzo[*e,h*]azulene;

3-bromomethyl-2-oxa-8-thia-1-aza-dibenzo[*e,h*]azulene;

3-bromomethyl-11-chloro-2-oxa-8-thia-1-aza-dibenzo[*e,h*]azulene;

3-bromomethyl-2,8-dioxa-1-aza-dibenzo[*e,h*]azulene;

dimethyl-[2-(2-oxa-8-thia-1-aza-dibenzo[*e,h*]azulen-3-ylmethoxy)-ethyl]-amine;

dimethyl-[3-(2-oxa-8-thia-1-aza-dibenzo[*e,h*]azulen-3-ylmethoxy)-propyl]-amine;

dimethyl-[2-(11-chloro-2-oxa-8-thia-1-aza-dibenzo[*e,h*]azulen-3-ylmethoxy)-ethyl]-amine;

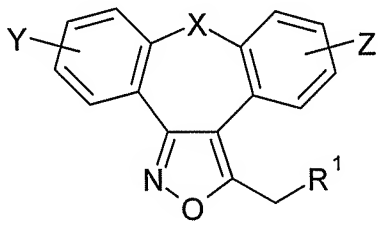
dimethyl-[3-(11-chloro-2-oxa-8-thia-1-aza-dibenzo[*e,h*]azulen-3-ylmethoxy)-propyl]-amine;

dimethyl-[2-(2,8-dioxa-1-aza-dibenzo[*e,h*]azulen-3-ylmethoxy)-ethyl]-amine; and

dimethyl-[3-(2,8-dioxa-1-aza-dibenzo[*e,h*]azulen-3-ylmethoxy)-propyl]-amine,

and ~~or~~ a pharmaceutacaly acceptable salt ~~or solvate~~ thereof.

9. (Currently Amended) Process for the preparation of the compound of the formula **I**:




I

wherein

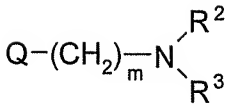
X is selected from the group consisting of $CH_2$,O, S, S(=O), $S(=O)_2$ and $NR^a$, wherein $R^a$ is selected from the group consisting of

hydrogen, $C_1$-$C_3$-alkyl, $C_1$-$C_3$-alkanoyl, $C_1$-$C_7$-alkoxycarbonyl, $C_7$-$C_{10}$-arylmethoxycarbonyl, $C_7$-$C_{10}$-aroyl, $C_7$-$C_{10}$-arylalkyl, $C_3$-$C_7$-alkylsilyl and $C_5$-$C_{10}$-alkylsilylalkoxyalkyl;

Y and Z are each independently selected from the group consisting of hydrogen, halogen, $C_1$-$C_4$-alkyl, $C_2$-$C_4$-alkenyl, $C_2$-$C_4$-alkynyl, halo-$C_1$-$C_4$-alkyl, hydroxy, $C_1$-$C_4$-alkoxy, trifluoromethoxy, $C_1$-$C_4$-alkanoyl, amino, amino-$C_1$-$C_4$-alkyl, $C_1$-$C_4$-alkylamino, *N*-($C_1$-$C_4$-alkyl)amino, *N,N*-di($C_1$-$C_4$-alkyl)amino, thiol, $C_1$-$C_4$-alkylthio, sulfonyl, $C_1$-$C_4$-alkylsulfonyl, sulfinyl, $C_1$-$C_4$-alkylsulfinyl, carboxy, $C_1$-$C_4$-alkoxycarbonyl, cyano and nitro;

$R^1$ is selected from the group consisting of hydrogen, halogen, $C_1$-$C_7$-alkyl optionally substituted with one or more substituents selected from the group consisting of halogen, hydroxy, $C_1$-$C_4$ alkoxy, thiol, $C_1$-$C_4$ alkylthio, amino, N-($C_1$-$C_4$) alkylamino, N,N-di($C_1$-$C_4$-alkyl)-amino, sulfonyl, $C_1$-$C_4$ alkylsulfonyl, sulfinyl and $C_1$-$C_4$ alkylsulfinyl; $C_2$-$C_7$-alkenyl optionally substituted with one or more halogen atoms; $C_2$-$C_7$-alkynyl; hydroxy; hydroxy-$C_2$-$C_7$-alkenyl; hydroxy-$C_2$-$C_7$-alkynyl; $C_1$-$C_7$-alkoxy; thiol; thio-$C_2$-$C_7$-alkenyl; thio-$C_2$-$C_7$-alkynyl; $C_1$-$C_7$-alkylthio; amino; *N*-($C_1$-$C_7$-alkyl)amino; *N,N*-di($C_1$-$C_7$-alkyl)amino; $C_1$-$C_7$-alkylamino; amino-$C_2$-$C_7$-alkenyl; amino-$C_2$-$C_7$-alkynyl; amino-$C_1$-$C_7$-alkoxy; $C_1$-$C_7$-alkanoyl; $C_7$-$C_{10}$-aroyl; oxo-$C_1$-$C_7$-alkyl; $C_1$-$C_7$-alkanoyloxy; carboxy; ~~an optionally substituted~~ $C_1$-$C_7$-alkyloxycarbonyl optionally substituted with one or more substituents selected from the group consisting of halogen, hydroxy, $C_1$-$C_4$ alkoxy, thiol, $C_1$-$C_4$ alkylthio, amino, N-($C_1$-$C_4$) alkylamino, N,N-di($C_1$-$C_4$-alkyl)-amino, sulfonyl, $C_1$-$C_4$ alkylsulfonyl, sulfinyl and $C_1$-$C_4$ alkylsulfinyl; ~~an optionally substituted~~ $C_7$-$C_{10}$-aryloxycarbonyl optionally substituted with one or two substituents selected from the group consisting of fluoro, chloro, $C_1$-$C_4$ alkyl, cyano, nitro, hydroxy, $C_1$-$C_4$ alkoxy, thiol, $C_1$-$C_4$ alkylthio, amino, N-($C_1$-$C_4$) alkylamino, N,N-di($C_1$-$C_4$-alkyl)-amino, sulfonyl, $C_1$-$C_4$ alkylsulfonyl, sulfinyl and $C_1$-$C_4$ alkylsulfinyl; carbamoyl; *N*-($C_1$-$C_7$-alkyl)carbamoyl; *N,N*-di($C_1$-$C_7$-alkyl)carbamoyl; cyano; cyano-$C_1$-$C_7$-alkyl; sulfonyl; $C_1$-$C_7$-alkylsulfonyl; sulfinyl; $C_1$-$C_7$-alkylsulfinyl; nitro;

a substituent of the formula **II**:



II

wherein

$R^2$ and $R^3$ are each independently hydrogen, $C_1$-$C_4$-alkyl or aryl [[as]] as defined above or,

$R^2$ and $R^3$ taken together with the nitrogen atom to which they are attached form an ~~optionally substituted~~ five or six member heterocycle containing at least one heteroatom selected from the group consisting of O,S, and N ~~or heteroaryl~~ which can be optionally substituted with one or two substituents selected from halogen, $C_1$-$C_4$ alkyl, cyano, nitro, hydroxy, $C_1$-$C_4$ alkoxy, thiol, $C_1$-$C_4$ alkylthio, amino, *N*-($C_1$-$C_4$) alkylamino, *N,N*-di($C_1$-$C_4$-alkyl)-amino, sulfonyl, $C_1$-$C_4$ alkylsulfonyl, sulfinyl, and $C_1$-$C_4$ alkylsulfinyl; or

a monocyclic or bicyclic aryl group; a monocyclic or bicyclic heteroaryl group; and a heterocycle, wherein the monocyclic or bicyclic aryl group, the monocyclic or bicyclic heteroaryl group and the heterocycle are linked to the thiophene ring via a direct bond or a C1-C4 alkylene group , and are each optionally substituted with one or more substituents selected from the group consisting of fluoro, chloro, C1-C4 alkyl, cyano, nitro, hydroxy, C1-C4 alkoxy, thiol, C1-C4 alkylthio, amino, N-(C 1-C4) alkylamino, N,N-di(C1-C4-alkyl)-amino, sulfonyl, C1-C4 alkylsulfonyl, sulfinyl and C1-C4 alkylsulfinyl;

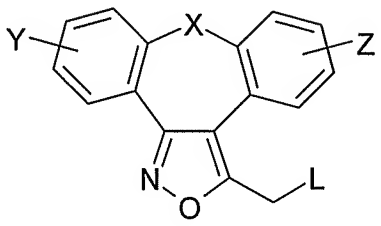
m is an integer from 1 to 3;

Q is oxygen, sulfur or nitrogen;

and its pharmacologically acceptable salts ~~and solvates~~,

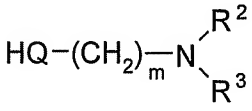
which comprises:

a) condensing a compound **Ia**:



**Ia**

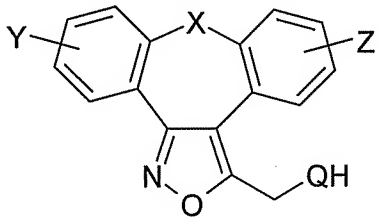
wherein X, Y and Z are as defined above, L is a leaving group, with an optionally selected alcohol, thioalcohol or amine or with a compound of the formula **IIa**:



**IIa**

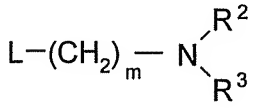
wherein all radicals and symbols have earlier stated meanings;

b) condensing a compound of the formula **Ib**:



**Ib**

wherein all symbols have the earlier stated meanings, with a compound of the formula **IIb**:



**IIb**

wherein the radicals $R^2$ and $R^3$ and the symbol m have the earlier stated meanings and symbol L is a suitable leaving group.

10. (Previously Presented) A pharmaceutical composition comprising at least one compound according to claim 1 or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt or solvate thereof and a pharmaceutically acceptable excipient diluent and/or carrier.

11. (Currently Amended) A method of treating ~~or preventing~~ neurodegenerative disease in a human in need thereof ~~a disease, damage, or disorder of the central nervous system associated with a disorder of neurochemical equilibrium of biogenic amines or other neurotransmitters~~ comprising administering the dibenzoazulene of claim 1.

12. - 21. (Canceled).

22. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 11, wherein the dibenzoazulene is selected from the group consisting of:

3-methyl-2-oxa-8-thia-1-aza-dibenzo[*e,h*]azulene;

11-chloro-3-methyl-2-oxa-8-thia-1-aza-dibenzo[*e,h*]azulene;

3-methyl-2,8-dioxa-1-aza-dibenzo[*e,h*]azulene;

3-bromomethyl-2-oxa-8-thia-1-aza-dibenzo[*e,h*]azulene;

3-bromomethyl-11-chloro-2-oxa-8-thia-1-aza-dibenzo[*e,h*]azulene;

3-bromomethyl-2,8-dioxa-1-aza-dibenzo[*e,h*]azulene;

dimethyl-[2-(2-oxa-8-thia-1-aza-dibenzo[*e,h*]azulen-3-ylmethoxy)-ethyl]-amine;

dimethyl-[3-(2-oxa-8-thia-1-aza-dibenzo[*e,h*]azulen-3-ylmethoxy)-propyl]-amine;

dimethyl-[2-(11-chloro-2-oxa-8-thia-1-aza-dibenzo[*e,h*]azulen-3-ylmethoxy)-ethyl]-amine;

dimethyl-[3-(11-chloro-2-oxa-8-thia-1-aza-dibenzo[*e,h*]azulen-3-ylmethoxy)-propyl]-amine;

dimethyl-[2-(2,8-dioxa-1-aza-dibenzo[*e,h*]azulen-3-ylmethoxy)-ethyl]-amine; and

dimethyl-[3-(2,8-dioxa-1-aza-dibenzo[*e,h*]azulen-3-ylmethoxy)-propyl]-amine; and ~~or~~

pharmaceutically acceptable salts ~~and solvates~~ thereof.